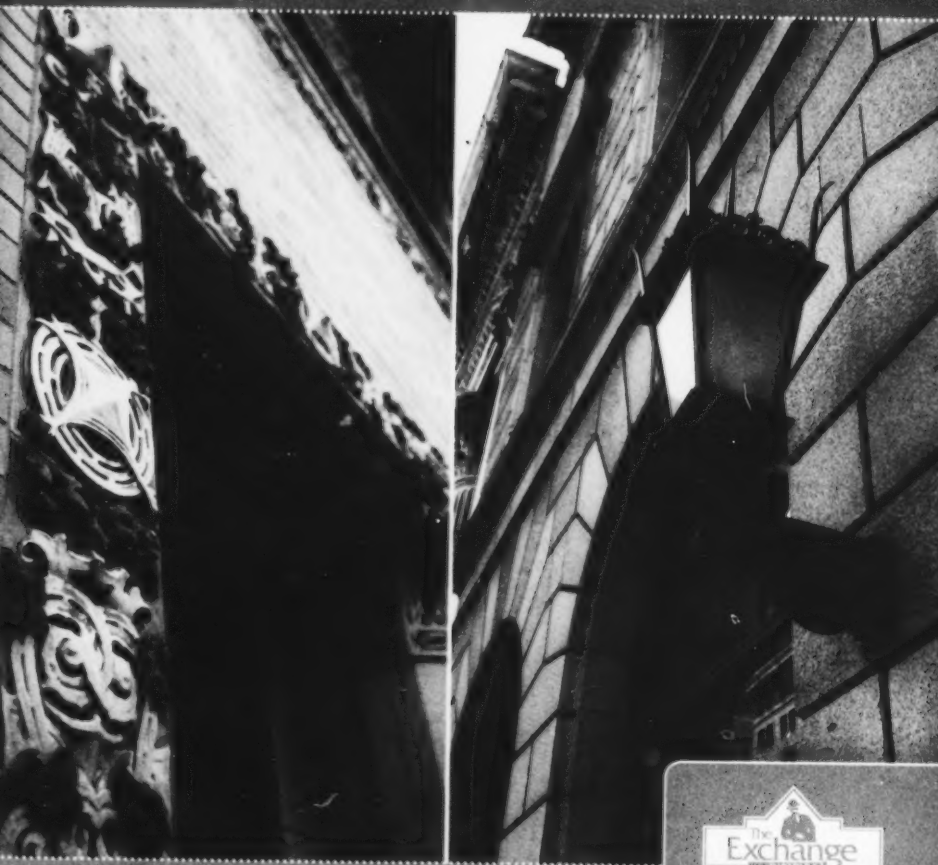


WINNIPEG'S EXCHANGE DISTRICT



**A Heritage Guide to one of
Canada's most celebrated neighbourhoods**

How to use the Heritage Guide

The Heritage Guide features 56 locations in Winnipeg's historic Exchange District. A variety of different buildings and sites are included in the guide to give the reader a thorough overview of the history and architecture featured in the area. The architectural terms in **bold** are defined in the Glossary on Page 33. The guide can be read on its own or used as a companion piece to go on a self-guided tour of the area. The tour route is approximately 2.7 km (1.7 miles) and requires approximately three hours to complete. The included map shows the tour route and building locations.

Credits

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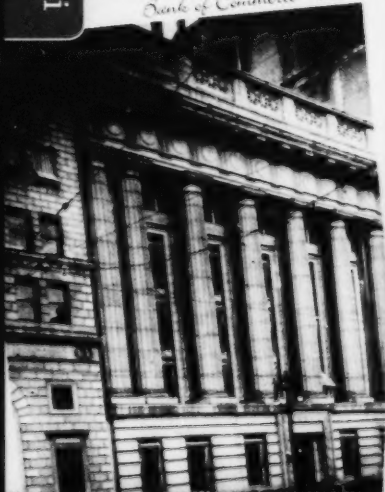
INTRODUCTION TO WINNIPEG'S EXCHANGE DISTRICT

Located just north of Canada's celebrated corner of Portage and Main, the 20-block Exchange District National Historic Site encompasses over 100 turn-of-the-century buildings that display an innovative and functional approach to period architecture. Massive stone and brick warehouses, elegant terra cotta-clad skyscrapers, narrow angled streets and covered alleys recall the time when this district was the economic gateway to Western Canada and commercial centre of Winnipeg. The First World War, the Depression and other changes eventually eroded its role, leaving the district to age virtually intact.

First to develop were the areas along the rivers. A booming shipping industry developed in the mid-1800s as large numbers of people and goods arrived from the south. Lombard Avenue, originally named Post Office Street, was the centre for this activity and had docks located at its river end. The arrival from Minnesota of the steamboat Anson Northup in 1859 signalled a hectic period of river activity that, although significantly usurped by steam locomotives after 1880, continued into the 20th century. Large steamboats, capable of transporting up to 200 passengers or hundreds of tons of cargo were soon supplying the area with all manner of manufactured goods, raw materials and, perhaps most importantly, an improved connection to the outside world.

I.

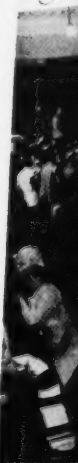
Bank of Commerce - 1878



Union Bank Building - 1878



Crane



By the late 1800s, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) helped to define Winnipeg as the "Gateway to the West," transforming the once-fledgling town into a prosperous, cosmopolitan community. Thousands of settlers stopped in Winnipeg before heading further west to claim their homesteads. This immigration boom established Winnipeg as the agricultural centre of the country, leading international grain markets with over half of the world's wheat sales during the 1920s.

In 1905, Winnipeg was the fastest growing city of its size in North America, gaining a new nickname - "Chicago of the North." By 1911, there were twenty-four rail lines converging on the City, establishing it as one of the largest rail centres in the world. The CPR's main and spur lines serviced more than 200 wholesale businesses and warehouses centred in the Exchange, creating an iron web throughout the District. Today, the names of these turn-of-the-century grocery and dry goods wholesalers can still be seen, etched or painted on buildings throughout the area along with remnants of the rail lines that led to their loading docks.

As the city flourished, the Exchange became home to dozens of British and Eastern Canadian financial institutions, many of which established their Western Canadian headquarters in Winnipeg. By 1910, twenty such financial institutions claimed space on Main Street's "Bankers Row" creating an unrivalled architectural showcase of prosperity. The Exchange District also became the entertainment and vaudeville showcase for Western Canada with its opulent theatres and cabarets, drawing such legends as Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers. The renowned Pantages Theatre on Market Street stands today as one of Canada's finest post-1900 vaudeville venues. While only one remnant of the vaudeville era remains, the District still serves as Winnipeg's cultural nucleus. The architectural richness of the District also serves as a popular film and television backdrop attracting many different productions.

Exchange Building - 1927



Southwest from Albert & Arthur



Lebanon Avenue - 1928



The publishing trade was another important aspect of The Exchange and by the end of World War I the area boasted three daily newspapers located on McDermott Avenue. Winnipeggers often gathered outside the offices of the Manitoba Free Press, the Winnipeg Telegram and the Winnipeg Tribune to discover the latest news posted on the wall or shouted through megaphones from office windows.

It was from these walls and windows that Winnipeggers first heard news of the onset of World War I and the opening of the Panama Canal, events that were to slow the growth of the city and alter its economic development. A sharp drop in wheat prices and the end of the immigration boom to Canada resulted in a significant slowdown in retail and wholesale activity. Changes in freight rates after 1920 destroyed Winnipeg's previous transportation cost advantages. By the mid-1920s, firms were forced out of business and the glory years of the Exchange District were over.

In the 1970s, financial obstacles discouraged efforts to preserve, rehabilitate and re-use historic buildings in The Exchange. Through the combined efforts of dedicated and far-sighted citizens, heritage groups, politicians, business leaders and government officials, creative partnerships were established that set in motion a renewal of the district. All levels of government have contributed to this renewal by establishing protective legislation, direct capital investment, financial and professional support for private-sector conservation projects, research, and commemorative recognition of sites and structures.

III

Fire toll, 1910

Caruthers and Co. truck



The City of Winnipeg's Historical Buildings By-law has enabled it to designate structures within its jurisdiction that are of architectural and/or historical significance and to regulate the alteration and demolition of listed buildings.

The Historical Buildings Committee, created by City Council in 1979, is authorized to advise City Council on heritage issues and policies, research, assess and recommend structures for designation, and regulate proposed alterations to listed structures. Its responsibilities have grown in recent years to include the administration of programs that provide financial assistance for conservation initiatives.

In 1997, the Federal Government designated Winnipeg's Exchange District a National Historic Site in recognition of its role in the development of the Western Canadian economy. Through millions of dollars of public- and private-sector investment, the Exchange District continues to be the centrepiece of Winnipeg's future.

The Exchange District Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) is actively involved in interpreting the area's history, recognizing that raising awareness plays a key role in fostering appreciation and understanding of the District's architectural treasures. The BIZ seasonal Guided Walking Tours program that runs from June to September each year is popular with both local citizens and tourists. The tours, led by an engaging and informative guide, include interior stops and stories about Winnipeg's heyday.

The contemporary Exchange District is dynamic and vibrant, known for its specialty boutiques, antique shops, restaurants and nightclubs. The District is also Winnipeg's hub of arts and culture, home to art galleries, studios, theatres, festivals and museums. The Exchange District again reflects the neighbourhood's continued prominence as the city's commercial and cultural heart.

Municipal City Hall - 1908



Stage hands for Portages Theatre - 1912-13





1 **Old Market Square**

KING STREET &
BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1979

This land was once occupied by the city's central fire station (see page iii), a solid brick structure with large arched doorways for equipment and a tower for drying hoses. Built in 1899, the heart of the warehouse district was an ideal location for a fire hall. At the sound of the alarm, horses and fire wagons would burst out of the hall's doors and gallop towards the fire. Though the fire station was demolished in 1966, this site continues to see more excitement than any other place in the Exchange District. The park, named after the former adjacent public market (see Building 29), is a popular location that plays host to a variety of events including the Winnipeg Fringe Festival and the Winnipeg Jazz Festival. Paying homage to the original market, the park is now home to a farmers' market in August and September.

one

2 **Ryan Block**

492 MAIN STREET, 1883

The "Shoe King," Thomas Ryan, was known for the immensity of his retail/wholesale enterprise in Western Canada. In 1883 he built an elaborately ornate four-storey stone structure on this site. After ten years Ryan's firm left the block for larger quarters. A fire in 1903 and a larger one in 1933 left the building in its present two-storey configuration. For sixty years beginning in 1933, the building was home to the well-known Mac Donald Shoe Store. The north wall of the building faces Old Market Square and features a brightly coloured mural depicting both the past and present in the Exchange District, painted by Alfred Lamoureux and Michael Pournier in 1982 and 1983. Today the Ryan Block houses the Exchange District BIZ office and other tenants.





3

Carruthers Building

124 KING STREET, 1896

This small buff-coloured brick and stone building was constructed for Andrew Carruthers to house his wool, hide and fur business. Before artificial fibres became common, the garment industry relied on companies like Carruthers' to supply the raw materials required to make clothing. Starting in 1906 the upper floor was occupied by Der Northwestern Publishing Company Limited, the first German language publisher in Western Canada. Their biggest publication was Der Northwestern, a German language newspaper serving many of the recent immigrants from Germany, Russia, Romania and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The editorial view of the newspaper was that readers should adapt to Canada, their new homeland. Even with this pro-Canadian stance the paper was forced to publish in English by the end of the World War I, and to halt publication entirely during the Winnipeg General Strike. Today, a popular British pub occupies the building.

two

4

Maw's Garage

116 KING STREET, 1906

When Joseph Maw opened his garage, horse and wagon, streetcar and walking were the most common ways to travel around the city. Cars were just beginning to become popular, but high prices and rough road conditions discouraged many potential buyers. This did not stop Maw. When it opened in 1906 Maw's Garage was the first Ford dealership in Western Canada and, for a short time, the largest dealership in the world, displaying up to 140 cars. To entice customers, Maw built a racetrack five kilometres (three miles) west of the dealership at the present site of Polo Park Shopping Centre and encouraged potential buyers to try out his cars on the smoothly paved track. The garage was constructed using large steel trusses that rested on the exterior brick walls, creating a wide-open show room with no internal columns. The building is currently used as a parking garage.



5

Travellers Building

283 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1906

The North West Travellers Association was formed in Winnipeg in 1882, supporting the large numbers of travelling salesmen using Winnipeg as a home base for their activities in the rapidly growing west. In 1906 the association decided to construct their own building, reflecting its growth. Darling and Pearson, one of Canada's finest architectural firms, was hired to design the structure. The building boasts a two-storey limestone entrance, red brick exterior and heavy overhanging **cornice**. The fifth and sixth floors were used as club rooms by the association with the lower floors rented out as offices. The basement featured a barbershop and Turkish baths consisting of a pool, steam rooms and showers. Today the building is a mix of retail space, offices and condominiums.

three

6

Gault Building

100 ARTHUR STREET, 1901

Constructed for Gault Brothers Company Limited, a dry goods wholesaler, this building stands as a fine example of a **Richardsonian Romanesque** warehouse. It was the presence of Gault Brothers along with similar companies that would establish Winnipeg as the wholesale centre for all of Western Canada. The company and the entire city were growing at a rapid rate and, just two years after construction, the warehouse was expanded with an annex, two additional floors, and a covered **drayway**. Today the building still has one of the few remaining rooftop sign fences in the district. The fence now advertises Artspace, a multi-disciplinary arts centre housing 24 different arts groups and an independent movie theatre. This was one of the first warehouse conservations in the Exchange District.





7

J. H. Ashdown Hardware Store

211 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1904

James Ashdown was one of the most influential men of his time. He came to Winnipeg as a young tinsmith and went on to found a hardware empire stretching across Western Canada (see Building 12). He was known as the city's "Merchant Prince" and lobbied hard to have Winnipeg declared a city when the population was still that of a village. He would go on to serve as alderman and later as mayor. Ashdown operated a retail store on this site beginning in 1871, first in a small wood frame building and, as his company grew, a larger brick structure. A massive fire in October 1904 destroyed the building, but he quickly rebuilt two storeys and reopened in time for the Christmas season. The top four floors were added the following year. Ashdown carried typical hardware items and expanded his inventory to include housewares, appliances and sporting goods. In 2002 the building was rehabilitated and is now home to a number of performing arts groups and offices.

8

Imperial Dry Goods

91 ALBERT STREET, 1899

In 1899 the Imperial Dry Goods Block opened as an early department store. Wealthy shoppers would pull up to the Main Street entrance with its large display windows, be greeted by the doorman and served tea and crumpets while deciding on purchases. The store carried clothing, kitchenware, tools, stationery, confectionary, toys, Christmas goods, flowers and small household items. In 1905 retail giant Eaton's opened their flagship store on Portage Avenue and retail business began to leave the Exchange - Imperial Dry Goods closed the following year. The front two-thirds of the building were then converted into a Royal Bank branch. The Albert Street portion of the block would become a Canadian Legion and later a Young Men's Hebrew Association site, before becoming retail space.



four



9

Mariaggi Hotel

86 ALBERT STREET, 1901

In the early days of the 20th century the Mariaggi was the centre of Winnipeg's social scene.

Originally an apartment block, the building was transformed into an elegant hotel in late 1902.

It was equipped with such luxuries as running water, a passenger elevator, steam heat, electric lights, telephones, brass beds and velvet carpets.

For the enjoyment of his guests, the owner provided fresh produce and milk from his own farm. For all the luxury on the upper floors, the most impressive part of the building was the basement. Known as "The Grotto," the space had four cave-shaped dining rooms with a waterfall that splashed into a goldfish pond. The hotel also boasted the longest bar in the West, stretching all the way from Albert to Arthur Street. It was converted back to apartments and retail space in 1917 and opened as a theme hotel in 1984.

10

Telegram Building

70 ALBERT STREET, 1882

Though this **Italianate style** building first began as a warehouse for dry goods wholesaler R.J. Whitla and Company, it is better known as the former home of the Winnipeg Telegram newspaper. The Telegram, Manitoba Free Press, and the Winnipeg Tribune were the major papers in the city at the turn of the century. Along with numerous smaller papers, they were concentrated at or near the intersection of McDermot Avenue and Albert Street in an area that became known as "Newspaper Row."

It was one of the most vibrant street corners in the city, and the competition between the newspapers was intense. Each paper had their partisan slant and would frequently make editorial and even personal attacks on their rivals. Large crowds would often gather at the intersection to hear the latest news or sports updates from newsmen who would get the results off the telegraph wire and yell them out the windows to the crowds below. The building is one of the district's most decorative with its **pilasters, voussairs, belt courses** and heavily embellished **cornice**. Presently the building is a mix of retail and office space.





11

Lyon Block (Bate Building)

217 McDERMOT AVENUE, 1883

The Lyon Block was originally a warehouse for Lyon, Mackenzie and Powis, a wholesale grocery firm. In 1900 the Manitoba Free Press moved into the building. First published in 1872 and now known as the Winnipeg Free Press, it is the oldest newspaper in Western Canada. Newsboys were used to distribute the paper citywide. Many were recent immigrants and the money they earned was often used to help support their families. They could use leftover papers as a form of currency to get into a show or baseball game, ride the streetcar, or acquire a free lunch. In 1903 the Free Press vacated the building and it was purchased by Sir James A.M. Aikins, an influential lawyer who became Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor (1916-1926). Under Aikins' ownership the warehouse was enlarged by the construction of two storeys and converted into a retail/office building. The Lyon Block was renamed the Bate Building in 1942 and the new name was placed on the building's **frieze**. The building still contains office space layouts, interior finishes and the cage elevator dating from the 1903 work.

six

12

Criterion Hotel

214 McDERMOT AVENUE, 1903

A favourite tavern for journalists from the nearby newspapers, the Criterion opened in 1903 as a middle-class hotel for business travelers. The stone front of the building is ornately decorated with rare lavishly coloured **terra cotta** tiles and a stone **bracketed balconet**. Spending the night at the Criterion meant sleeping in a room measuring only 3 metres by 3 metres (9 feet by 9 feet) and sharing the one washroom per floor. Given the narrow width of the building, natural light and ventilation was provided to internal rooms through interior air and light shafts. Although these deficiencies limited the use of the hotel rooms after the 1930s, the first floor bar remained an area fixture into the 1970s. Today the building has been renovated for office and retail space.



13

Lake of the Woods Building

212 McDermot Avenue, 1901

The Western Canada wheat economy was responsible for the growth of the region and had a profound effect on Winnipeg, the region's premier city for many decades. Rail transport companies, flour mills, farm implement dealers and financial institutions all located in Winnipeg. Based in Montreal, the Lake of the Woods Milling Company began operations in a Keewatin mill near Kenora, Ontario in 1888, taking advantage of the cheap power and the railway's excellent shipping capacities and rates. The Winnipeg office in the Exchange District was established as their Western Canada headquarters. The unique front façade features dark brick walls, a corner tower and a red sandstone entrance complete with inscribed arch and stained glass. The company published a line of cookbooks so successful it was estimated one out of every two Canadian households had one. In 2002 the building was converted into an art gallery.

14

Hammond Building

63 ALBERT STREET, 1902

Moving to Winnipeg in 1896, William J. Hammond would become famous for giving away free hats from his Main Street store. In 1902 Hammond and his partners decided to build a two-storey warehouse on an underdeveloped section of Albert Street. As Hammond acquired additional resources he expanded the warehouse in a piecemeal fashion. Three separate expansions took place in 1905, 1907 and 1909, each utilizing different architects. In the 1980s a red tile roof was added. Although the result is a somewhat uneven façade, the light-coloured brick walls, modest stone accents and arched window openings are familiar elements found on buildings throughout the Exchange District. The building has been renovated and is presently used for office space.





15

Royal Albert Arms Hotel

48 ALBERT STREET, 1913

The Royal Albert Arms Hotel's opening in 1913 was largely ignored by local press due to opening at approximately the same time as the palatial Fort Garry Hotel on Broadway. The Royal Albert is typical of hotels built in Winnipeg in the pre-World War I era. It was never known for its luxury, but provided 53 comfortable rooms for traveling businessmen with a large café and popular bar. The hotel's unusual curved shape, square-headed windows, wrought iron balconies and heavy overhanging eaves set it apart from neighbouring buildings. In 1987 a glass atrium was added to the front of the building. Now known as the Royal Albert Arms, it is still a functioning hotel with a bar that often features live music.

16

Electric Railway Chambers

213 NOTRE DAME AVENUE, 1913

The Winnipeg Electric Railway Company translated its local electricity monopoly into considerable wealth and influence. When a new headquarters was required, the company built one of the city's most spectacular structures. Local architects Pratt and Ross were hired to design a skyscraper in the **Chicago style**. The tower featured two prominent facades facing Notre Dame Avenue and Albert Street. The first two floors were clad in polished granite leading to the ornate **terra cotta cladding** of the upper storeys. Perched lions, elaborate arches and one of the Exchange District's most ornate **cornices** accent the upper levels of the building. The company lit the exterior with 6000 lights, a feature that continues to light up the night sky today.





17

Canadian General Electric Building

265 NOTRE DAME AVENUE, 1930

Winnipeg's economy, so intimately connected to the agriculture industry, was devastated by the Great Depression of the 1930s. However not all companies were initially affected. One such firm was the eastern-based Canadian General Electric Company that sold a wide variety of electrical equipment. Its new Winnipeg headquarters was one of only a handful of major construction projects completed during the early 1930s. The building was designed in the **Art Deco style**. Gone were the **rusticated stone bases**, arches and other classical detailing. Architects were instead using modern building techniques, simpler designs and materials such as reinforced concrete and steel. The building, one of the few Art Deco buildings found in the City, includes a carved limestone **parapet** embellished with stylised geometric designs.

nine

18

Peck Building

33 PRINCESS STREET, 1893

Identifying this warehouse as an early example of the Romanesque style in the District are the building's scale, arched openings and roughly textured materials including limestone and red sandstone. Accents such as the stone heads along the Princess Street façade relate to the British background of its original architect Charles H. Wheeler (1838-1917). The building was erected for the John W. Peck Company, manufacturers of men's and boys' clothing. Like many other Exchange District businesses, growing demand resulted in an expansion of the building with two floors added in 1907. The building is now used as an antiques warehouse.





19

Hydro Sub-Station No. 1

54 KING STREET, 1910

Tired of paying excessively high electricity rates, 90% of Winnipeg voters approved of the creation of a public power utility in 1906. A dam was constructed at Pointe du Bois on the Winnipeg River and in 1910 Winnipeg Hydro began generating and distributing electricity, thereby ending the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company monopoly. Power was distributed to three sub-stations including this one. Because the King Street sub-station contained offices that were open to the public, the building was more decorative than most industrial buildings. The sub-station, with its elaborate roofline, was a two-storey building of steel and reinforced concrete clad with light or bre-coloured brick and stone accenting. The building had two distinct sections; the northern portion housed offices and public areas and the southern portion contained the machinery. Low rates ensured the success and growth of Winnipeg Hydro. In 2002 Winnipeg Hydro was purchased by Manitoba Hydro, ending its 92-year existence. The building is still used as a hydro sub-station.

20

Maltese Cross Building

66 KING STREET, 1911

The Maltese Cross Building was designed by L.H.G. Russell (1862-1946), one of Winnipeg's more prolific architects who designed churches, residences, warehouses and office blocks throughout the city. The building was constructed to house the Winnipeg branch of rubber wholesaler Gutta Percha and Rubber Company. The firm supplied a wide assortment of goods including hoses, belts, boots, clothing, floor mats and automobile tires. The company used the Maltese Cross as their logo, though it was dropped when the symbol came to be associated with Nazi Germany. Crosses still adorn the exterior stone trim, the McDermot Avenue entrance and the balustrade on the interior staircase.



21

Stovel Building

245 McDERMOT AVENUE, 1893

The Stovel Building, like several other large warehouses in the district, expanded as business grew resulting in a carefully designed addition that cannot be easily detected. First built in 1893 as a two-storey structure, in 1900 it would be extended down McDermot Avenue and two additional storeys added. Though the walls are actually constructed of light-coloured clay brick, the building is distinct for its red-coloured paint. Stovel Printing was one of the most technologically advanced printing companies in Canada. A family-owned business known for treating their employees well, they would host picnics and had company sporting teams. In 1916, a fire gutted the interior of this block and the Stovel Company moved to a new facility, renting out the repaired McDermot Avenue warehouse to firms including Fatons and Kay's Limited. Today the building houses both retail and office space.

eleven

22

I.O.O.F. Hall

72 PRINCESS STREET, 1883

Crescent moons and stars in the cornice metalwork recall the building's original role. Above the moons and stars are the initials "I.O.O.F." and "M. No. 1 E." They stand for the Independent Order of Oddfellows and Manitoba Number One Lodge. Founded in 15th-century England, the Oddfellows were a fraternal organization based on bible stories and British hierarchy and traditions. Members paid dues and benefits were paid out to them if they were in distress or, in the case of premature death, to their widows and orphaned children. The organization was established in Winnipeg in 1873. Not wanting to be burdened with the cost of their new building, only the third floor containing meeting rooms and a ballroom for society functions was used by the Order. The lower floors were rented to generate revenue for the organization, which remained in the building until the opening of its new headquarters in 1910.



23

Campbell Brothers & Wilson Warehouse

92-100 PRINCESS STREET, 1903

Before supermarkets, people relied on small independent grocery stores, which in turn relied on large wholesale suppliers. The Campbell Brothers and Wilson Company were one of the largest grocery wholesalers in Western Canada. They would buy goods in large quantities, divide them into smaller amounts and distribute them to grocery stores. Campbell Brothers and Wilson dealt in dry goods and carried items such as tea, coffee, spices, dried fruits and tobacco. The warehouse backed onto a **spur line** to ensure rapid shipping. There were three loading docks next to the **spur line** and another three for horse and wagons. Two additional storeys were added on to the original four-storey warehouse in 1913. The expansion was designed by the building's original architect J.H.G. Russell, who did not attempt to integrate it with the lower portion.

Fairechild Building

110 PRINCESS STREET,
1906

Organized by local businessmen in 1877, the Fairechild Company was an early farm implement dealership in Winnipeg. The rapid expansion of the company necessitated the construction of this large warehouse in 1906. Designed by Winnipeg architect John D. Atchison (1870-1959), the Fairechild building was inspired by Chicago architect Louis Sullivan's work as seen in the **terra cotta** panels with floral motifs and stylized company logos. On the rear façade were large industrial style windows arranged in a grid-like pattern commonly found in buildings of this style, but now a rare feature in the District. When the building was first built the basement extended out under the Princess Street sidewalk, as was common at the time. To make the basement more pleasant, the sidewalk contained glass prisms that lit the space with natural light. The glass prisms no longer remain in the sidewalk but are still found in the foyer of the building. The building is now used for condominiums.

25

Massey Building294-296 WILLIAM AVENUE,
1885 / 1904

With the City Hall, Civic Market, and later the Grain Exchange only a few steps away, the Massey Manufacturing Company (founded in 1847) built their farm implement dealership on an ideal site. The company expanded rapidly to become one of the largest farm equipment retailers in Canada under the name Massey-Harris Company. The building has a **rusticated** base of Manitoba Tyndall stone containing fossils of creatures that lived in an inland sea that covered Manitoba 350 million years ago. The first floor features windows with segmental arch-heads and elaborate keystones. This continues on the second floor with smaller keystones, and the top floor exhibits simpler rectangular windows and even smaller keystones. As the company grew, more space was required. In 1904 a second warehouse was constructed adjacent to the first, which more than doubled the usable space. At present the building is home to the University of Winnipeg's Continuing Education Division.

26

Bawlf & Benson Buildings

146 & 150 PRINCESS STREET, 1882

Winnipeg experienced a speculative land boom in 1881-82, brought on by news that the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway was coming. Joseph Benson owned a livery stable, but wanted to cash in on soaring land prices. He partnered with Nicholas Bawlf to develop a rental property, and Barber and Barber, the foremost architects in Winnipeg at the time, designed the Benson and Bawlf blocks. The buildings were highly decorative and reflected the popularity of the **Italianate style** of the time. The buildings contain pressed metal, arched **corbelled brickwork** above the windows, **pediments**, **cornices**, columns and other decorative features. They housed a number of tenants over the years, including an electric tool distributor that vacated in 1962 and a hotel that closed in 1974.



Princess Street between William and Elgin Avenue is home to some of the most ornate façades in the Exchange District. The streetscape is made up of the façades of the Bawlf, Benson, and Harris Buildings and the first and second Grain Exchange Buildings (see Buildings 26, 28, 30). Red River College's modern media, information technology and business programs were relocated to this block to help conserve these heritage buildings while assisting with the revival of Winnipeg's downtown. A new downtown campus was constructed of part or all of six heritage buildings and three new buildings. Corbett Cibinel Architects designed the new complex to respect the architecture of the Exchange District without imitating it. The college conserves not only the historic façades but also major interior elements including party walls, entire interior spaces and a wide range of individual elements such as wainscoting, vaults, tiles, radiators and pressed tin ceilings. The back lane, a former **spur line**, was maintained and now functions as atrium space.

Although the campus incorporates many heritage elements, the building is anything but dated. **Building integrated photovoltaics**, a rooftop garden, and heating and cooling sensors in each classroom help control the building's power use. The large windows allow solar heating and provide natural daylight. In recognition of its contribution to sustainable development and urban renewal, the design of the college has won national and international awards. Today Red River College brings 2000 students to Winnipeg's downtown.





Ross Avenue

Elgin Avenue

William Avenue

Bannatyne Avenue

McDermot Avenue

Hargrave Street

Adelaide Street

Notre Dame Avenue

Princess Street

Ellice Avenue

Garry St.

Ross Avenue

James Avenue

Main Street

Rupert Avenue

Centennial Concert Hall

Public Safety Building

City Hall

Old Market Square

Canadian Wheat Board

CanWest Global Place

Disraeli F

M

M

Porta

Main Street

fifteen

--- NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY

..... SUGGESTED SELF-GUIDED TOUR ROUTE

H HISTORIC SITES & MONUMENTS BOARD OF CANADA - EXCHANGE DISTRICT PLAQUE

E EXCHANGE DISTRICT BIZ OFFICE
133 ALBERT STREET

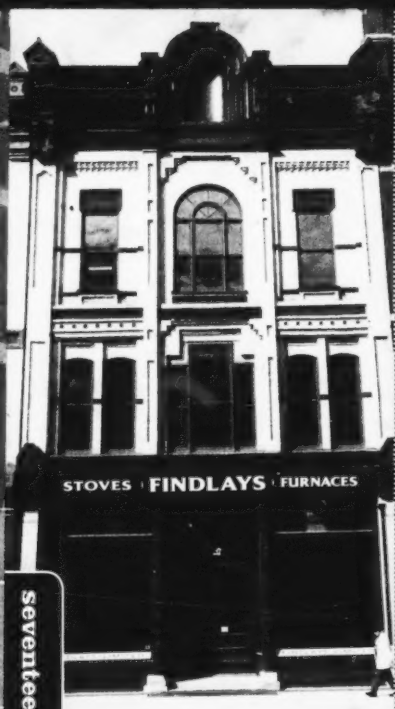
WALKING TOUR



28 Harris Building

154 PRINCESS STREET, 1882

When in front of the Harris Block, one's attention is drawn up to the elaborate **cornice**. At the centre of the **cornice** is a niche that once held a statue of Ceres, the Roman Goddess of grain and fertility, holding a sheaf of wheat in her arms. She was selected for the building because of the area's connection to agriculture. During the 1940s or 50s the statue disappeared and to this day her location remains a mystery. Similar in appearance to the Benson and Bawlf buildings (see Building 26), the Harris Building was designed by local architect James Chisholm (1840-1936), a well-respected designer who had been hired to replace the original architect when problems arose with Winnipeg's first City Hall (see Building 31). The building was first occupied by A. Harris Son and Company, an agriculture equipment supply company. They vacated the building in 1891 when they merged with Massey Limited, and the building would become home to a number of small-scale businesses.



Seventeen

29

Public Safety Building (Site of the Old Civic Market)

151 PRINCESS STREET, 1882

First constructed in 1877 and rebuilt in 1890, the Civic Market (see Page 36) was a popular shopping location in Winnipeg. The two-storey market building featured a three-storey central tower and was built in the **Italian Palazzo style**. Vendors could rent stalls at the market and sell their wares to the public. Visitors could find fresh meat, fish, poultry, cheese, fruits, vegetables and preserves for sale. By 1919 there were other places to buy goods and interest in the downtown market waned. That same year, during the Winnipeg General Strike, the market became a popular gathering place for strikers. As a result, city leaders decided to convert the building into civic offices. The building was renovated and two-storeys were added, radically changing its appearance. Despite this, vendors continued to sell their goods next to the building for years to come. As part of an urban renewal project in the 1960s, the structure was demolished to make way for the Public Safety Building, headquarters of the city's police, fire and 911 emergency services.



The West's prominence in Canada's agricultural industry was secured once a reliable product could be conveniently transported across the country. Through experimentation the fertile soil of the Western Canadian prairies produced a new strain of wheat, Hard Red Spring No. 1. The milled flour from this wheat made excellent bread at a low cost – less flour was required to make a loaf of bread that rose higher and had a better texture. The arrival of the transcontinental railway to the West gave prairie farmers a dependable year-round system to transport crops eastward and ultimately overseas to world markets.

The Grain Exchange was founded in 1887 as a result of this increased activity. As it evolved, the Exchange filled a number of crucial roles within the growing wheat economy: it served as a place for buyers and sellers to meet and conduct business, established rules of trade and published set prices, created a link with international markets and provided a place where disputes between traders could be settled.

With humble beginnings in a basement room at City Hall, the Grain Exchange quickly outgrew its space and sought a larger, more modern and permanent home and in 1892 the first Grain Exchange Building was completed at 164 Princess Street. Originally the building featured large storefront windows and three storeys of light-coloured brick. A fourth floor was added in 1902. The Grain Exchange continued to expand at a brisk rate and additional space was again required. In 1898 the second Grain Exchange Building was constructed at 160 Princess Street, immediately south of the first building. It was four storeys of red brick, with a storefront of stone and *terra cotta* mouldings. Tall brick **pilasters** reached up to a central raised **pediment**, under which the building's name was carved in stone. Interior openings were made in the party wall to allow easy access between the two buildings.

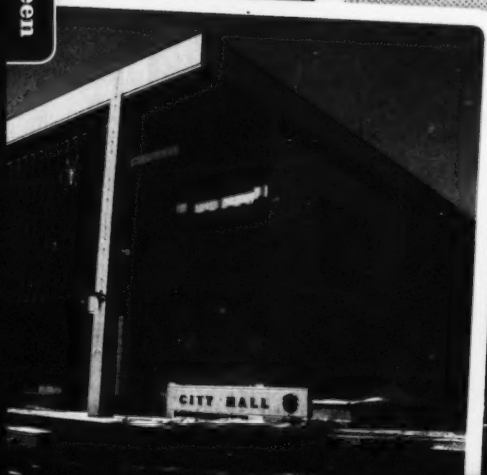
The third floor of the Grain Exchange Building was where all the excitement occurred. This was the trading floor, where millions of dollars in commodities were traded every year. In 1901 there were 26 grain companies and brokers with offices in the building. The role and influence of the Grain Exchange would continue to increase and in 1908 it relocated to Lombard Avenue (see Building 55). The move would signal the demise of the Civic Market precinct as the City's premier business district.



When the City of Winnipeg was incorporated in 1873 civic leaders met wherever they could find space. It was soon decided that Winnipeg required a proper home for civic government and the first City Hall was built in 1876. Constructed over Brown's Creek, the location proved a costly mistake as the building began to sag soon after construction and exterior support posts were required to stabilise the building.

Winnipeg's second City Hall, often referred to as the "Gingerbread City Hall", was completed in 1886. The building was designed by architects Barber and Barber in an ornate Victorian style. The City Hall consisted of a central clock tower and four smaller corner towers, all elaborately decorated. On a base of rough cut stone sat walls of red-brown brick highlighted with light-coloured stone. In 1961 Mayor Stephan Juba wanted a more modern City Hall for Winnipeg. Not one to be subtle with his metaphors, the mayor took reporters up the clock tower where someone had placed the remains of an old goat, obviously the mayor's opinion of the building. His point made, the City Hall was demolished in 1962.

Amid protests over the demolition of the "Gingerbread City Hall" and a 1961 city council decision to undertake several urban renewal schemes grew Winnipeg's present City Hall complex. After an extensive planning stage, the winning design by local firm Green Blankstein Russell and Associates (now Stantec) was chosen in a national competition. Completed at a cost of \$6-million, it is one of the City's fine **International style** structures. It consists of a six-storey administration building and a two-storey Council Chambers and office building connected by a civic square that extends the view of Market Avenue from the river into the western Exchange District. One of the key design ideas for the building was to use quality materials (Tyndall stone, granite, bronze, and fine woods) found elsewhere in the Exchange District, as well as to have a design that clearly expressed City Hall's structure and varied roles.

Winnipeg City Hall - 1886



32

Union Bank Building & Annex

500-504 MAIN STREET, 1904

The Union Bank Building is the oldest standing steel frame skyscraper in Western Canada, built during the peak of Winnipeg's economic boom. Toronto architects Darling and Pearson designed one of the Exchange District's finest **Chicago style** structures. Its classical detailing includes decorative **terra cotta** on the base and attic floors and accenting around the windows on the middle floors. The Union Bank historically took on the small loans and mortgages that many of the larger banks would not, making it perfectly suited to serve the many settlers heading west. As Western Canada's economy expanded, so did the bank. It had so much faith in Winnipeg that it established its national headquarters in this building in 1912. An annex matching the ornamentation of the larger structure was completed in 1911. In the 1920s the bank ran into financial difficulties when grain prices fell, and merged with the Royal Bank in 1925. The larger bank remained in the building until 1993.

33

Confederation Life Building

457 MAIN STREET, 1912

With its gleaming white **terra cotta** cladding, the Confederation Life Building is often called the "Wedding Cake of Main Street." The building is an excellent example of an early skyscraper in the **Chicago style**. The building's facade follows the curve of Main Street. The top of the building contains a stunning **cornice** that reaches out approximately 3 metres (9 feet) over the sidewalk. The Toronto-based Confederation Life Assurance Company organized in 1871 and opened an office in Winnipeg a decade later on the lot now occupied by this skyscraper. They did not require all of the space in the newer 1912 building and offices were rented out to law firms, loan officers and other professionals. The City of Winnipeg now uses the building for office space.



34 Pantages Theatre

180 MARKET AVENUE, 1914



Before radio, television and movies, one of the most popular methods of entertainment was vaudeville. A typical vaudeville show consisted of a juggler, a magician, comedians, animal acts, mimes, acrobats and musicians. Pantages Theatre is the last remaining of the many theatres that once called the Exchange District home. Performers at the Pantages included such greats as the Marx Brothers, Stan Laurel, Buster Keaton and Milton Berle, along with such novelty acts as Felix the Mind Reading Duck. The Pantages Theatre was part of a North American chain of vaudeville theatres operated by Alexander Pantages. He used the Winnipeg theatre as a testing ground for his acts – if the audience reacted positively the performers could go on to tour across North America. However, if the response was poor, Pantages was known to fire acts on the spot leaving them stranded in Winnipeg. The interior of the theatre, with its ornamental plasterwork, lush carpeting and intricate painting, was both opulent and luxurious. It continues to host live performances, and in 1992 a modern addition was constructed on its west side.

twenty-one

35 Manitoba Theatre Centre

174 MARKET AVENUE, 1970

Continuing the important historic theme of live theatre in the Exchange District, the 789-seat Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC) was completed in 1970. With its substantial **massing** and rugged concrete exterior, it is recognized as an excellent example of the **Brutalist style** in Canada. It was designed by the Winnipeg firm Waisman Ross Blankstein Coop Gillmor Hanna (now Number Ten Architectural Group) in a conscious effort to complement the design of the Concert Hall and Museum complex on the north side of Market Avenue. Half of the \$2-million construction cost was raised through citizen donations, and the theatre represents one of several major Manitoba Centennial projects completed in Winnipeg. Founded in 1958, MTC quickly gained a national reputation for its creativity, and its new home has continued to support and enhance this artistry.





36 **Hell's Alley** BETWEEN MARKET AVENUE & JAMES AVENUE, 1919

At first glance the alley between James and Market Avenue, with its cavernous space, loading docks and fire escapes, looks like any other in the Exchange District. A closer look reveals the District's only remaining rails from an old **spur line**. The alley also had an intimate relationship with one of Canada's most important 20th century events, the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. The strike directly involved one third of the city's population and ended in bloodshed. On Saturday, June 21, the protest turned violent after the North West Mounted Police charged into a crowd of strikers on Main Street. Fleeing from the events of "Bloody Saturday" approximately 200 strikers ran into the alley or the adjacent block. "Special Police" newly hired by the anti-strike leaders came at them from both ends of the alley and attacked the crowd with batons and other weapons. The strikers were forced to defend themselves with whatever they could find. Although the fight lasted only 10 minutes, 27 people were injured.

37 **James Avenue Pumping Station** 109 JAMES AVENUE, 1906

The James Avenue Pumping Station was built for the sole purpose of supplying water to fight fires in the downtown. While trying to put out a massive fire at the Ashdown store (see Building 7) in 1904, firefighters could not get enough water pressure. The city's artesian wells could not provide the required pressure, so the old river pumps were reactivated. This caused the city's domestic water supply to mix with river water, and within days 1300 people came down with typhoid fever. While much of Winnipeg still had no reliable source of clean drinking water, city leaders set about creating an isolated water system to fight fires. Due to the size of the machinery, the pumps were installed and then the brick superstructure was constructed around them. The building has large square-headed and arched windows along three sides, topped by **corbelled brick bands**. A network of high-pressure pipes and seventy fire hydrants were installed throughout the downtown as part of the new system and when it opened it was considered the most sophisticated system in the world. The pumping station was used into the 1980s.

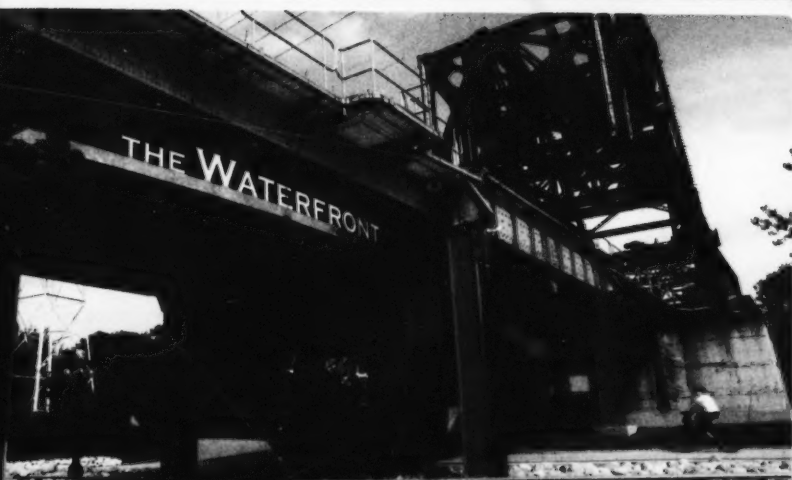


The eastern edge or 'back door' of the Exchange District is bounded by the Red River. From the river's edge it is still possible to see how historic agricultural river lots ran up from the river into what would become downtown Winnipeg. Boundaries between these long, thin strips of land now coincide with east-west streets such as Lombard Avenue, McDermot Avenue, Bannatyne Avenue, Market Avenue and James Avenue – many of which are named for prominent early Red River settlers. Over time, the area became an early respectable middle class residential neighbourhood.

This site along the river became home to Winnipeg's booming shipping industry in the mid-to-late 1800s. People and goods would arrive at the docks located at the present day Lombard Avenue and Waterfront Drive intersection. The docks were also used by early merchants to moor flat boats as floating stores to avoid paying property taxes to the city, much to the displeasure of retailers along Main Street. Lumber and flour mills, storage yards and other businesses soon transformed the once residential neighbourhood into an industrial site.

Slicing through the eastern edge of the District was the Winnipeg Transfer Railway, from which **spur lines** ran through downtown. These railway lines, completed in 1890, formed an important transportation network that moved goods into and out of Winnipeg. Eastern manufacturers shipped goods to Winnipeg by rail. Once in the city, trains followed **spur lines** to warehouses where the goods were unloaded, sorted and repacked in rail cars for shipping to new western markets on the Canadian prairies. A decrease of rail traffic in the District during the 1970s led to the removal of the tracks the following decade.

To recognise his interest in downtown parks, a linear riverbank park was opened in 1984 and named for Winnipeg's longest serving mayor (1956-1977), Stephen Juba. Other redevelopment schemes have been completed since the creation of the park, the most recent being Waterfront Drive in 2003. Linking the Exchange District to The Forks and Point Douglas, Waterfront Drive is to be the backbone of several new residential developments.





39

The Brokerage

115 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1899

Now called The Brokerage, this building began as two separate structures. The five-storey western portion was constructed for Merrick, Anderson and Company, manufacturing agents for a number of different lines of stoves, ranges and furnaces. The three-storey eastern portion was built for Edward Nicholson to house his grocery firm. In 1905 Nicholson made his accountant, Danny Bain, a partner in the firm. Bain later became the sole owner and joined the two buildings together in 1929. Known for more than just his grocery company, Bain created Winnipeg sports history as he captained the Winnipeg Victorias to two Stanley Cup Championships in 1896 and 1901. Bain would later be made a member of the International Hockey Hall of Fame. The building was vacant by the 1970s, but has now been renovated into modern office space.

40

Northern Electric Building

65 RORIE STREET, 1928

One of the last warehouses constructed in the Exchange District, the Northern Electric Building combined traditional warehouse architecture with a more modern appearance. The building has a smooth-cut stone foundation, but little decoration and none of the arches found in other warehouses. The structure housed an office and distribution centre for the Northern Electric Company that carried a wide range of electrical products including wires, cables, telephone parts and radios. When the Northern Electric Company left in the 1950s, the building became a garment factory, as did a significant number of warehouses throughout the district, prompting references to the area as the "Garment District." In 2005 two additional floors were added, and the building is presently used for commercial and office space.



twenty-four



Customs Examining Warehouse

145 McDERMOT AVENUE, 1908

41

No warehouse in the Exchange District saw as much variety in their goods as the Inland Revenue or Customs Examining Warehouse. Built according to a standard design by the Department of Public Works (Government of Canada) it features a steel frame structural system with reinforced concrete floors. Its exterior design, with rusticated stone base, huge arched ground floor windows, dark brick walls with stone accents and heavy overhanging cornice, resembles neighbouring warehouses. Imported goods arriving at the warehouse included spices, textiles and machinery from the United States, Great Britain and elsewhere. Before World War I customs duties were a main source of revenue for the Federal Government, and the Winnipeg port was the third largest in the country. In 1912-13 collected duties of imported goods totalled over \$11 million. The building continues to be used by the Federal Government as Parks Canada's Western Canada Service Centre, and contains conservation laboratories, offices and artifact collection storage.

twenty-five

42 Ashdown Warehouse

167 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1895

The Ashdown Warehouse at the intersection of Bannatyne Avenue and Roric Street was designed by architect S. Frank Peters (1847-1926). It was built to coincide with construction of the **spur line**, which Ashdown himself had negotiated for the east side of the District. Originally a modest three-storey warehouse, hardware dealer James H. Ashdown's facility would see numerous additions and expansions, which mirrored the growth of his company's fortunes (see Building 7) and the economy of Western Canada. The warehouse was expanded four separate times and, with the joining of the Codville and Company warehouse to the west, became the Exchange District's largest warehouse and one of the finest examples of a late 19th and early 20th century Romanesque style structure. In 1985 the complex was the first building in the Exchange District to be converted for residential use.





43

Kelly Building

181 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1904

The Kelly Building, a fairly modest warehouse not unlike dozens of others in the district, is unique for its namesake. In 1860 Thomas Kelly established Kelly Brothers, one of the largest construction firms in Western Canada. The firm was responsible for a number of important contracts, including the first and second Grain Exchange Buildings (see Building 30) and the Bank of Nova Scotia on Portage Avenue. In 1912 Kelly Brothers received their largest and most prestigious contract – the construction of the Manitoba Legislative Building. Almost immediately there was controversy around the financing. A Royal Commission determined over-payments in excess of \$800,000 had been made to Kelly. He fled to Chicago, but was later extradited to Winnipeg where he was found guilty of embezzlement and fraud. He was sentenced to two and a half years in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary, however it was rumoured he spent most of his time living in the warden's house instead of a cold, cramped jail cell. The building now houses loft condominiums.

44

McClary Building

185 BANNATYNE AVENUE, 1899

At the turn of the century, rail was the most effective way to transport merchandise. Rail lines west of Main Street attracted the first warehouses to the district. Development was slower on the east side until J. H. Ashdown negotiated a **spur line** to serve his new warehouse (see Building 42). The McClary Manufacturing Company produced wood stoves and coal furnaces, and required rail service to transport their heavy goods. As a result, the company built their four-storey warehouse along the **spur line** in 1899. The building saw multiple additions over the next 13 years – an example of the success enjoyed by Eastern Canadian businesses that set up shop in Winnipeg to serve the expanding local and regional markets.



twenty-six

45

Imperial Bank of Canada 441 MAIN STREET, 1906

Originally connecting two major fur trading forts of the Hudson Bay Company, Main Street is one of the most significant thoroughfares in Winnipeg. As the city developed, Main Street's importance was recognized by banks when they arrived from the east, and by 1883 a number had opened along the strip. In a short time there were over 20 banks and financial institutions stretching along the street from Portage Avenue to William Avenue, resulting in the nickname "Banker's Row." Today many of the massive bank buildings remain, having found new uses. The Imperial Bank was designed by the architectural firm of Darling and Pearson. Neo-Classical in style, the Imperial Bank's ornate stone clad exterior was matched by the marble, mahogany and bronze accenting in the foyer, main banking hall and basement vault areas. The third floor featured living quarters, bathrooms, a dining room and a clubroom for staff. The bank vacated the premises in 1988, and the building has since been converted into a bar and dance club.

twenty-seven

46

Duffin Block 474 MAIN STREET, 1881

Given the improvement of photographic technologies over the years, it is easy to forget that taking a photo was once a complex and time consuming process. In the 1880s a family who wanted a portrait taken would have to go to a photography studio. The Duffin Block was the first such studio in Winnipeg. Simon Duffin came to Canada from Ireland, purchased a wagon and outfitted it with photography equipment. He would travel across Ontario taking and selling photographs as he went. In 1881 he opened a large photography studio in Winnipeg. Duffin was known for his portraits and landscape photos, taking pictures of rail lines, Lake Winnipeg and life in early Mennonite settlements. In 1888 he sold the studio and focused on supplying photography equipment. His company was bought out by Eastman Kodak in 1928 after 50 years of business. The Duffin Block was originally three-storeys high, however a fire in 1956 caused the top two floors to be torn down resulting in the one-storey building we see today.





47

Royal Bank of Canada Building

460 MAIN STREET, 1909

In order for it to stand out amongst the imposing structures along Winnipeg's Main Street, the Royal Bank hired New York architects Carrere and Hastings to design an **Italian Palazzo style** building, a rarity in the city. It would be this prominent internationally-renowned architectural firm's only Winnipeg design. The façade was clad in pink granite and boasted a distinctive Spanish style red tile roof. Once inside, visitors were greeted by opulence and splendour. Marble was a favoured material and was used heavily throughout the building – not only for floors and walls, but also a staircase, counters (with bronze cages), chequing desks and benches. The building also featured bronze doors, oak woodwork and skylights that illuminated the interior. The main floor banking hall is now used as a dance studio.

48

Bank of Toronto

456 MAIN STREET, 1907

When the Bank of Toronto decided to open their doors on "Banker's Row" they wanted a dramatic façade. Although the use of **Neo-Classical** detailing was fairly common, the choice of a marble exterior was unique. The façade consisted of four American marble **Corinthian columns** resting on large bases. The columns rose up to a fourth storey **marble entablature** and **balustrade**. Due to their massive weight, the columns had to be shipped to the city in pieces – each column weighed 40 tonnes. The interior of the bank contained a well-appointed banking hall and manager's office, private loan consulting rooms and a ladies sitting room demonstrating the value the bank placed on its female patrons. Today there are a number of offices in the building.



twenty-eight

49

Canadian Wheat Board Building

423 MAIN STREET, 1928 / 1964

This office tower was built in two stages. The northern section, completed in 1928, was designed with **Gothic Revival** accents such as slender vertical elements and window **tracery**. The southern section, begun in 1962, is one of the Exchange District's **International style** steel and reinforced concrete buildings. Clad in Tyndall stone, the newer section was designed by local firm Smith Carter Searle Associates to house the head offices of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) and over

500 of its employees. The CWB was created by the federal government in 1919 to purchase western wheat and sell it in domestic and export markets. The newer portion of the building was built on the site of Winnipeg's third Post Office Building (a post office from 1886 to 1908; demolished in 1961) and joined a growing list of buildings such as the new City Hall (see Building 31), and the Public Safety Building (see Building 29), that marked a distinct stylistic departure from the older warehouses and office buildings of the District.

twenty-nine

50

Bank of Hamilton

395 MAIN STREET, 1918

Due to shortages caused by World War I, new construction in Canada significantly slowed from 1915 to 1918. One of the major exceptions to this in Winnipeg was the Bank of Hamilton. A late arrival to the city, the bank purchased and renovated an existing building located on this corner of Main Street and McDermot Avenue and opened its first branch in 1896. In 1915 the bank discovered nearby construction had damaged their foundations. Rather than repair the building, the bank hired local architect John D. Atchison to design a replacement. Not wanting the building to be overshadowed by the massive Bank of Commerce to the south, Atchison designed a skyscraper with two prominent limestone façades. The opulence of the exterior was carried through to the interior and some of the original finishes remain in place. The main banking hall features marble and bronze finishes and a beam **coffered ceiling** with gold leaf highlights. One of the most stunning interior features is a marble spiral staircase with a bronze handrail. The building is now used as offices for the City of Winnipeg.





51

Bank of Commerce

389 MAIN STREET, 1912

The Canadian Bank of Commerce on Main Street would set the architectural standard for the company's branches across Canada. Toronto architects Darling and Pearson designed a building that was both opulent and grand. Created from the best available Canadian materials, the structure showcased the wealth and stability of the bank. The magnificent banking hall, illuminated by a gigantic coloured glass dome, features twenty elevated fluted Doric columns rising to the coffered ceiling 15 metres (50 feet) above. In 1969 the Bank of Commerce moved to the nearby Richardson Building. The building was slated for demolition but was saved by City Council and public outcry – a key event and the start of Winnipeg's building conservation movement. In 2002 the building opened as the Millennium Centre and now hosts dinners, concerts and other special events.

52

Union Trust Tower

191 LOMBARD AVENUE, 1913

With only 9 metres (27 ft) of Main Street frontage, the Union Trust Tower has a most unusual shape. To fit into this tight space, the building was constructed in a trapezoid shape with a small Main Street façade and a larger more prominent Lombard Avenue façade. The building, designed by Chicago-trained architect John D. Atchison, features highly decorated terra cotta containing the company's logo.

Originally trust companies handled any financial business banks were not permitted to do, which included acting as trustees for estates and handling mortgages and bonds. Most trust companies also had safety deposit vaults for their customers. During the 1930s the Union Trust Company faltered and in the 1940s the building was taken over by Great-West Life Assurance Company. Today a number of different companies have offices in the building.



thirty



thirty-one

53

Bank of British North America

436 MAIN STREET, 1903

The Bank of British North America is the oldest remaining building on Banker's Row. The structure was the home of the only non-Canadian bank on the Row. Based in London, England, the bank opened its first branch in Winnipeg in 1886. They leased space in various buildings before hiring architect Andrew Thomas Taylor to design their own structure. Based on the **Palladian style**, it is one of the few sandstone-clad structures in the Exchange District. Along with the bank, the building housed offices for savings, loan and trust companies, stockbrokers and residential accommodations for bank employees. In 2001, the building's interior was rehabilitated into an upscale nightclub where original wainscoting, tiles and **coffered ceiling** remain.

54

Great-West Life Building

177 LOMBARD AVENUE, 1911

The Great-West Life Building stands as a monument to the type of national success enjoyed by many Winnipeg companies around the turn of the century. City businessmen were concerned all of the money from insurance premiums collected in Winnipeg was funnelled out of the region. They believed the money should be invested in the local economy, and that the city's financial community would grow by having an insurance company based in Winnipeg. Founded in 1891, the Great-West Life Assurance Company grew at a rapid rate and new headquarters were called for. Completed in 1911, the building is constructed in the **Beaux-Arts style** almost entirely from Canadian materials. The façade is clad entirely in white marble from British Columbia, a rare occurrence at the time. Originally four-storeys in height, an additional four floors were added in 1922. Although the company vacated the building in the late 1950s, its corporate headquarters remain in the city and the company is now active on a global scale.





55

Grain Exchange Building III

167 LOMBARD AVENUE, 1908

Massive in scale, the third Grain Exchange Building was once the largest office block in the British Commonwealth. The space was required to house the Grain Exchange and the offices of many significant grain companies after outgrowing the space on Princess Street (see Building 30). It is estimated wheat production in Manitoba quadrupled to 60 million bushels between 1896 and 1911. This rapid expansion and the ever-increasing acreage under cultivation further west created the need for the mammoth facility. Five large additions to the original 1908 building make up the present structure. The most exciting place in the building was the trading room on the sixth floor. Inside were two pits, one for selling and the other for buying. Arched windows on three sides lit the space and the remainder of the walls were covered in blackboards where the day's transactions were recorded. In the early 1980s the Grain Exchange, renamed the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange in 1972, moved to new space at the corner of Portage and Main.

56

McDermot Avenue Streetscape

NORTH SIDE BETWEEN
MAIN & RORIE STREETS

The block of brick and stone structures on your right as you look west along McDermot Avenue towards Main Street includes several that have stood for over 100 years. One of the Exchange District's most intact streetscapes, the block touches on many of the area's historical themes. The oldest buildings were completed during the frantic real estate boom of the early 1880s. Others were built around 1900, just as Winnipeg began its decade of tremendous economic growth. The newest was completed in 1921, an example of post-World War I development in the district. Owners and tenants of these buildings have been as varied as the buildings themselves, from Winnipeg's first china and crockery wholesaler to a candy manufacturer to a drug wholesaler. The printing trade, so central to the District's development and well represented on this block – publishers, stationers, supply wholesalers and book binders – all located here to serve the nearby newspaper and magazine offices.



thirty-two

GLOSSARY

ARCHITRAVE - The lowest part of an ENTABLATURE; rests immediately on the capitals of the columns.

ART DECO STYLE - A decorative style of the 1920s and 1930s, characterized by streamlined curves and geometrical forms often applied to buildings' exterior and interior ornamentation including furnishings.

BALCONET (OR BALCONETTE) - A false balcony outside a window.

BALUSTRADE - A railing, as along a staircase or balcony.

BEAUX-ARTS STYLE - Developed at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France, the highly ornamental style became popular in the early 20th century, combining classic Greek and Roman motifs to produce grand, monumental structures.

BELT COURSE - A projecting horizontal band on the exterior of a building often marking the separation between floors.

BRACKET - A small supporting piece used to carry a projecting element like a cornice or balcony.

BRUTALIST STYLE - From the French term for raw concrete, "béton brut," Brutalism is an architectural style of the 1950-1970 era that featured irregular MASSING, minimal fenestration and rough surfaces created by its unfinished, poured-in-place concrete walls.

BUILDING INTEGRATED PHOTOVOLTAICS - Photovoltaic elements that are an integrated part of a building. Photovoltaic systems consist of panels of visible cells that collect and convert sunlight to electricity. The rest of the system consists of components that convert the electricity for specific applications.

CHICAGO STYLE - Named after the Illinois centre where it first gained popularity in the late 1890s, the style became intimately associated with the new building form - the skyscraper. These buildings were usually divided into three distinct sections: heavily ornamented ground and upper (attic) floors and a central portion with a grid-like arrangement of windows.

CLADDING - The material used to cover another material, as on the exterior of a building.

COFFERED CEILING - A ceiling with recessed panels often bordered with ornamental trim.

CORBELLED BRICKWORK - A step-like series of projecting rows of brick used as support or ornamentation.

CORINTHIAN COLUMNS - Consists of a base, **FLUTED** shaft and an ornamental bell-shaped capital featuring spiral scroll-like ornament, two rows of Acanthus leaves and an elaborate **CORNICE**.

CORNICE - Top projecting section of an **ENTABLATURE** or any projecting moulding along the top of a building.

DORIC COLUMNS - Based on either Greek or Roman examples, the fluted or unfluted shaft features a modest base and capital.

DRAYWAY - A loading area, often covered, used by horse-drawn carts (drays) and later by railways and trucks.

EAVES - The lower part of a roof that projects beyond the wall that supports it.

ENTABLATURE - Consisting of an architrave, frieze and cornice, it is the upper section of a column or building.

FLUTED - A series of vertical channels located around the circumference of a column shaft.

FRIEZE - Horizontal band of relief (molded or painted decoration) between the **ARCHITRAVE** and **CORNICE** of an **ENTABLATURE**.

GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE - Based on European models dating from 12th century France, the style found new expression in the early 1900s and is characterized by slender vertical piers, pointed arches, intricate **TRACERY**, buttresses, spires, oriel and bay windows and pinnacles.

INTERNATIONAL STYLE - Rising in popularity in the optimism of post-World War II society, the style is recognized by its use of angular edges, plain surfaces, large areas of glass and lack of applied ornamentation.

ITALIAN PALAZZO DETAILING - Named after Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), the style is based on the ancient Roman examples and features arches, columns and other classical detailing.

ITALIANATE STYLE - Popular from the 1830s until the end of the 19th century, the style was based on Italian architecture. Its symmetrical façades featured a wealth of classical ornamentation concentrated around doors and windows and was often finished by heavy overhanging **BRACKETED EAVES**.

MASSING - The overall size, external shape and form of a building.

NEO-CLASSICAL STYLE - An early 20th century style producing solid, massive structures based on the principles of classic Greek and Roman art and architecture.

GLOSSARY

PALLADIAN STYLE - Brought to Canada by the British in the early 19th century, this style saw a rebirth in the 20th century and is distinguished by its balanced façades, prominent rusticated basement storey, smooth walls, projecting entrance porch or frontispiece and classically-based ornamentation.

PARAPET - A portion of wall that projects above a roof.

PEDIMENT - A triangular element often found above a main doorway, window or at roof level.

PILASTERS - A shallow element mimicking a column that is in relief against a wall.

RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE STYLE - This style was developed by American architect H.H. Richardson (1838-1886) and used medieval Romanesque architectural elements such as round-headed arches, towers, massive forms and coarse textures. It became the most popular style for late 19th and early 20th century North American warehouses.

RUSTICATED STONE - Rough-cut masonry laid in massive blocks and separated from each other by deep joints, normally used on the lower levels of buildings.

SPUR LINE - A branch of a main rail line serving a specific area or region.

TERRA COTTA - A clay material, often fired in moulds, used for wall covering and ornamentation.

TRACERY - Delicate, net-like elements found in the upper portions of windows used to support the weight of the glass or used ornamentally in blank arches and vaults in Gothic architecture.

TRAPEZOID - A four-sided shape with two parallel sides.

VOUSSOIRS - A brick or wedge-shaped element forming part of an arch.

INTERNET RESOURCES

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ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/index.html>
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CITY OF WINNIPEG

<http://www.winnipeg.ca/historicalbuildings>
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EXCHANGE DISTRICT

<http://www.exchangedistrict.org>
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<http://www.heritagewinnipeg.com>
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<http://www.historicplaces.ca>
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<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/hrb/index.html>
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MANITOBA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Main Street, North from Lombard - 1900



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